

# Getting Started with Virtual Fairfax

## *A Quick Start Guide*

This Guide provides a brief overview of basic Virtual Fairfax features. Complete documentation that fully explains the navigation, search, data, tools, and many other aspects of *Virtual Fairfax* may be found in the [Virtual Fairfax Help Document](#).

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*View of Reston Town Center looking towards the west*

## System Requirements

3-D viewing of buildings and terrain places heavy demands on users' computers since much of the rendering occurs on the user's (client) computer. As a result, Virtual Fairfax has some recommended system and connection standards to ensure a positive exploring experience. Some older or low-end computers, slow internet connections, and certain software configurations may create difficulties in using the application. The system requirements for the TerraExplorer plug-in (a key component of *Virtual Fairfax*) are:

- **Operating System** - Windows 98/2000/Me/XP/Vista/7
- **System Memory** - 512MB RAM (1024MB or more recommended)
- **Video Card** - 64MB of memory (128MB or more recommended)
- **Internet Connection** - Broadband connection recommended.
- **Browser** - Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 or higher should be installed on machine. Virtual Fairfax can run on more recent versions of FireFox, Opera, or Safari, but it calls Internet Explorer from within the browser window.

The *TerraExplorer* plug-in is about 11 megabytes in size and may be downloaded and installed quickly from *Virtual Fairfax's* welcome page.

## Data Disclaimer

The geographic data contained in Virtual Fairfax is NOT to be construed or used as a "legal description". Virtual Fairfax does not contain survey data. Any determination of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries is for general information only and shall not be used for the design, modification, or construction of improvements to real property or for flood plain determination. While Fairfax County strives to provide the best data possible, it does not provide any guarantee of accuracy or completeness regarding the map information. Any errors or omissions should be reported to the Fairfax County Geographic Information Systems and Mapping Services Branch of the Department of Information Technology. In no event will Fairfax County be liable for any damages, including but not limited to loss of data, lost profits, business interruption, loss of business information or any other pecuniary loss that might arise from the use of this application or information it contains.





# Navigation

## *Points of Interest*

1. You may click a point of interest from the blue left side panel. This will “fly” you to the selected location.
2. Points of interest that are followed by the **3D** logo contain views of photo-realistic three-dimensional building models.
3. For the points of interest marked by the **TOUR** logo, clicking them will lead you on a dynamic tour of a broad area rather than one specific spot. To stop a tour, you may click the **Stop Flight** link on the upper right section of the page.



## *Using the Mouse on the Terrain*

1. Click and hold the left mouse button on a location in the terrain:
  - a. **To pan**, drag the mouse (the pointer icon will change  to ) to the sides, forward, or backward. The terrain location on which you clicked will be dragged along with the tool.
  - b. **To pan continuously**, drag the mouse in similar fashion as above but keep the mouse moving for a moment after releasing the mouse button. This “throwing” motion will continue the movement in the same direction. The speed that you move the mouse determines the speed that the imagery will move.
  - c. **To tilt and rotate**, either press the “Ctrl” button while dragging the mouse, or click (not roll) the mouse center wheel button to turn and tilt the terrain. The mouse icon will change from  to . This method is the best to appreciate the three-dimensional character of *Virtual Fairfax*.
2. **To zoom**, roll the middle mouse wheel to zoom in or out. To only change elevation, hold the “Ctrl” key when rolling the mouse wheel.



*Different perspective of a Tysons Corner building achieved using the pan and tilt navigation tool*

## Searching

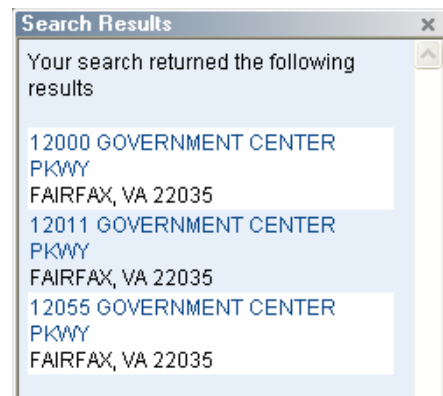
### *Finding a location on the map*

Using the intelligent search box on the upper left of the screen, you may type in any address, school, park, or other place name in the County. ***Please note that only addresses and places in Fairfax County's jurisdiction may be found.*** After pressing the “Search” button, if there is only one returned result, you will automatically “fly” and zoom to the location on the map. Note, it may take several seconds to return search results.



*When entering an address, please do not type its city, state, or ZIP code. This is unnecessary since only Fairfax County addresses are searchable.*

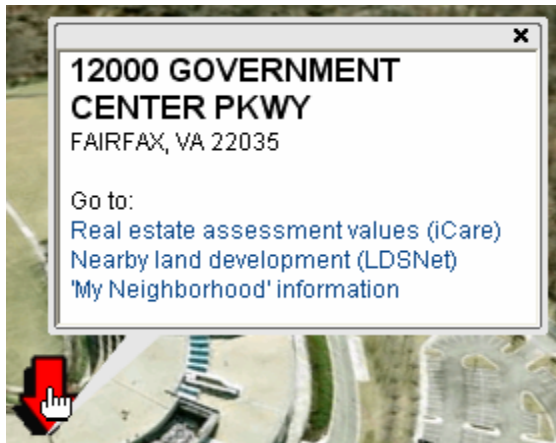
If there is more than one returned result, a list of possible matches to your entry will be shown in a “Search Results” window. Click the desired result to fly to the location. This window can be recalled by clicking the “search results” link to the right of the search box.



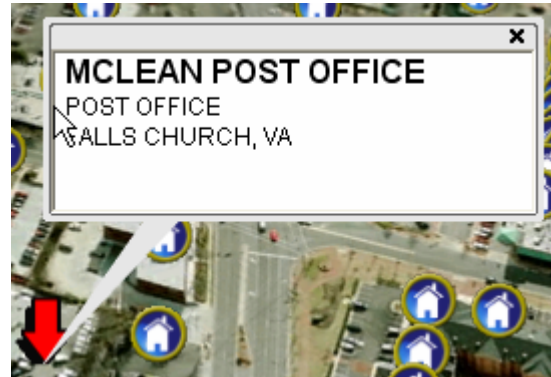
*A result list for the search terms “government center parkway”*

While flying to a selected location, an information box about the location will pop-up. Depending on the type of location, different information will be displayed. The box will disappear after a few seconds, but it may be recalled by clicking the large red arrow on the map terrain.

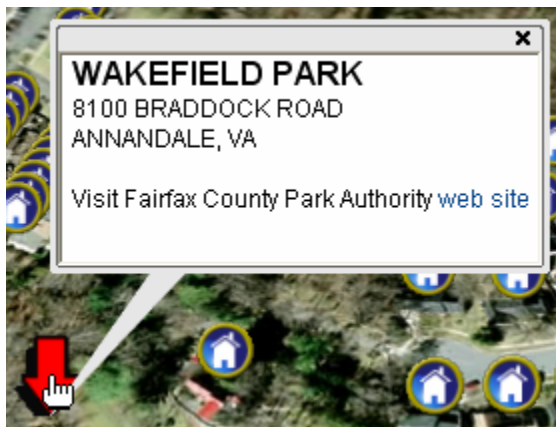
The following images provide examples of the type of information available for different types of searched locations.



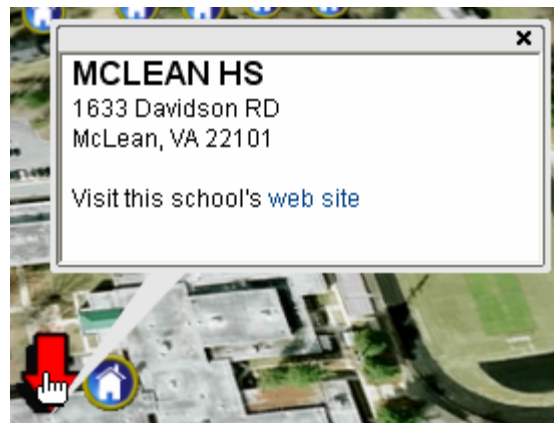
*Address locations provide a mailing address and links directly to information about the location in other Fairfax County web applications. Detailed explanation of these links may be found in the **Integrating with Other Applications** section of this documentation.*



*Searches for other locations provide the location name and its city. Basic information like this has come from the national Geographic Names Information System.*



*Fairfax County public parks provide a street address and a link to the park's web page on the Fairfax Park Authority website.*



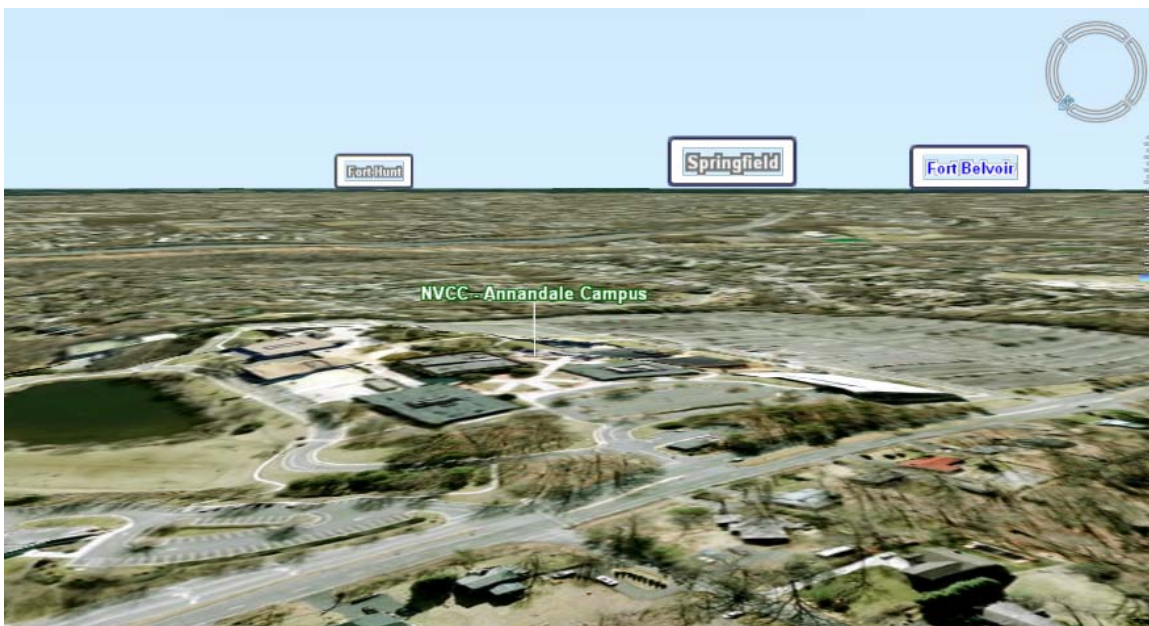
*Fairfax County public schools provide a mailing address and a link to the school's web page on the FCPS website.*

## Map Layers and Integration with Other Applications

In addition to the aerial imagery, terrain, and 3-D building data, there are several 2-D map layers available to view in *Virtual Fairfax*. There are both surface features (Addresses, Parcels, Political Boundaries, Roadways, and School Facilities) and thematic label boxes (Government & Education Institutions; Historic Sites, Museums, & Parks; Jurisdictions; and Regions). The surface feature layers draw on the terrain surface and the thematic label layers are billboarded (always facing the user) above the surface.



*Addresses, parcels, school facilities, and jurisdiction boundaries are visible on the terrain*




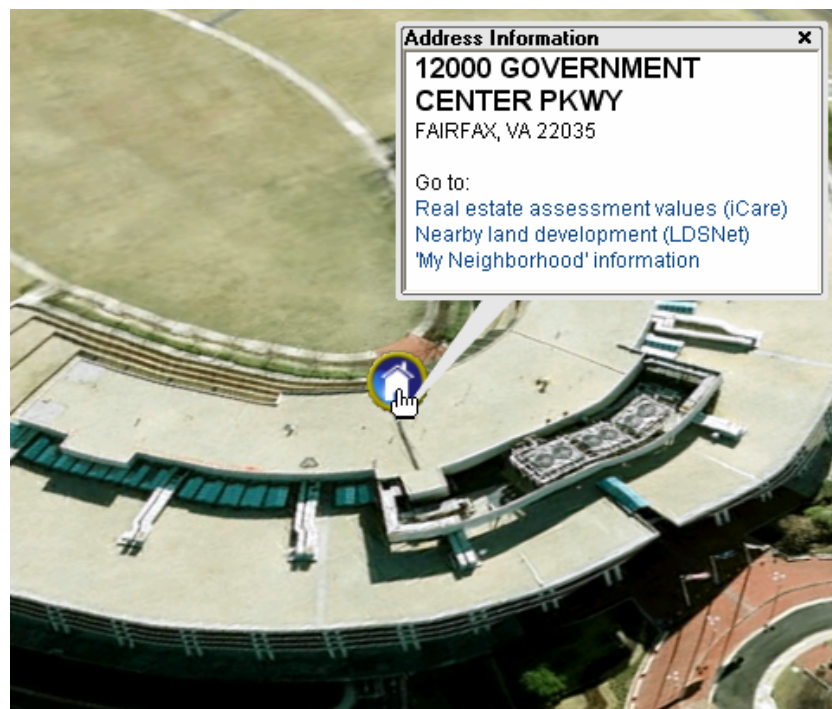
*Thematic “billboard” labels for different features are visible on the horizon*

The 2-D Map Layers group is found just below the 3-D Building layers on the left-hand panel. Each entry in the group may be turned on (visible) or off (not visible) by clicking the check box next to them.

You may not wish to see all 2-D layers concurrently. First, each layer that has to draw will increase processing and drawing times in the map window—the more layers, the slower the performance. Secondly, displaying too many layers can lead to confusing and unsightly map clutter.



Addresses and the thematic label layers provide more information when clicked. Clicking the house icon  opens an Address Information window that provides the mailing address and links to other applications (clicking the house icon may require temporarily turning off the 3D buildings layer that may be obscuring it). These application links go directly to the page for the desired address. One click from the Address Information window can provide extensive ownership and assessment information from Department of Tax Administration's iCare application. Another click will reveal nearby land development information (subdivision applications, rezonings, building permits, etc.) from the LDSNet application. The My Neighborhood link provides maps and a large report describing items such as the address' political representatives, the nearest hospital, and its designated FCPS school cluster.



An "Address Information" window is revealed when clicking a house icon

**VIRGINIA** Main Property Search Address Map Number

**MAP #: 0561 15 0014**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FAIRFAX COUNTY** 12000 GOVERNMENT CENTR PW **CURRENT RECORD**  
 1 of 1  
[Return to Search Results](#)  
[Neighborhood Sales](#)  
[Printable Summary](#)

**Owner**  
 Name BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FAIRFAX COUNTY,  
 Mailing Address 12000 GOVERNMENT CENTER PW SUITE 533  
 FAIRFAX VA 22035  
 Book  
 Page

**Parcel**  
 Property Location 12000 GOVERNMENT CENTR PW  
 Map # 0561 15 0014  
 Tax District 8T000  
 District Name SPRINGFIELD TRANSPORTATION  
 Land Use Code Gov owned med/hi rise(= > 5 stories)  
 Land Area (acreage)  
 Land Area (SQFT) 3,763,373  
 Zoning Description PDC(Planned Dev Commercial)  
 Utilities  
 County Historic Overlay District NO  
 For further information about Historic Overlay Districts, [Click here](#)  
 Street/Road  
 Site Description

**Legal Description**  
 Legal Description FAIRFAX COUNTY  
 GOVERNMENTAL CTR  
 PDC 14 7515 447

The iCare page for the Government Center--sales, value, and structural information is accessible

Home Living Here Doing Business Visiting Departments & Agencies Search Site:  Go

View Information for: General Information Available Map Types: Hybrid Map

Legend Search Results

New Search  
[View full report](#)  
 12000 GOVERNMENT CENTER PKWY  
 Parcel Identifier (PIN) 0561 15 0014  
[View Tax Assessment](#)  
[View land development information in LDSNET](#)

**Jurisdictions**  
 Supervisor District SPRINGFIELD  
 ZIP Code 22035

**Schools**  
 Elementary School EAGLE VIEW  
 Middle School LANIER  
 High School FAIRFAX

General information and aerial photography hybrid

The MyNeighborhood page for the Government Center—the “View full report” link provides a vast amount of neighborhood information including address location’s elected officials; polling places; watersheds; FCPS school pyramids, demographic information; and nearest parks, libraries, post offices, hospitals, police stations, & fire stations

### Land Use Search Results

Summary of Land Use Information for:  
 12000 Government Center Pkwy  
 Fairfax, VA 22035  
 Radius: 1/4 mile

[New Search](#)  
[View My Neighborhood Report](#)

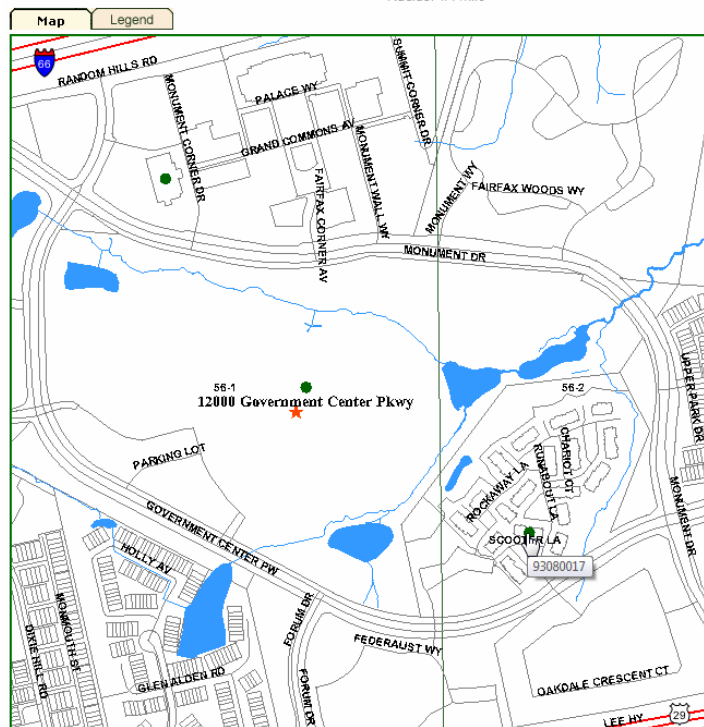
**Zoning Applications** [Show On a Map](#)  
 Click on Application Number below to View Details.  
 RZ 80-S -088                      RZ 86-W -001

**Subdivision and Site Plans** [Show On a Map](#)  
 Click on Plan Number below to View Details.  
 008058-SP -011-2

**Building Permits - Processed** [Show On a Map](#)  
 Click on Permit Number below to View Details.  
 93280170 (INT ALT R)

**Building Permits - Issued** [Show On a Map](#)  
 Click on Permit Number below to View Details.  
 93080017 (INT ALT C)                      100120256 (INT ALT C)                      100480118 (MISC)  
 93630156 (INT ALT C)

Permit Land Use Information Map for:  
 12000 Government Center Pkwy  
 Fairfax, VA 22035  
 Radius: 1/4 mile



*LDSnet provides a list of development activity within a quarter mile of a designated address—zoning applications, subdivision & site plans, and building permits can easily be viewed online*

Clicking any of the thematic labels (cities, towns, historic sites, colleges, parks, or government buildings) will open a window that reveals more information about that site. Most information windows have a text description in addition to website link that has additional information. Moving the mouse (without clicking) over labels may also open a callout box with additional site information.



Clicking the Ox Hill Battlefield Historic Site label reveals a window with a description and a link to a Fairfax County Parks Authority website.



Clicking the Dulles airport label opens a window with a small description and a link to the airport's website. Notice that mousing over the label without clicking gives a callout box with some additional information

## Contact and Support

Please visit the *Virtual Fairfax* [support page](#) which contains a quick start guide, full application documentation, and answers to several frequently asked questions. Comments or questions about *Virtual Fairfax* may be sent to [DITVirtual-Fairfax@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:DITVirtual-Fairfax@fairfaxcounty.gov). The developers of *Virtual Fairfax* are also interested in hearing ideas for new features and changes in future versions of the application.